

REMARKS

Applicants would like to express their sincere gratitude to the Examiner's supervisor, Ms. Christina Chan for answering Applicants' questions, which was very helpful.

In the Office Communication dated August 20, 2002 the Examiner has considered the response filed on June 10, 2002 not fully responsive to the Office Communication mailed April 10, 2002. The Examiner has stated that claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended more than three times.

In accordance with the above-mentioned phone conversation, Applicants provide the following information and explanations regarding the dates claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended.

Original claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended for the first time in response to the Notice to Comply with Requirements for Patent Applications Containing Nucleotide Sequence and/or Amino Acid Sequence Disclosures by adding corresponding sequence identification numbers to amino acid sequences disclosed in these claims. This submission has been completed on March 19, 1997. Claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended for the second time in response to the Office Action dated October 4, 2000 by changing the claim language. This submission has been completed on February 5, 2001. Claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended for the third time in response to the II Notice to Comply with Requirements for Patent Applications Containing Nucleotide Sequence and/or Amino Acid Sequence Disclosures by adding corrected sequence identification numbers to amino acid sequences disclosed in these claims. This submission has been completed on May 25, 2001. Amendment filed on May 25, 2001 has been considered non-compliant amendment thus it had not included a clean version and a marked-up version of the amended claims. In response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment filed on August 20, 2001 Applicants have presented the clean version and the marked-up version of the claims. Due to the clerical error, the both versions have indicated that the claims were "amended", and not "thrice amended" as supposed. This error has been corrected in response filed on June 10, 2002 to the Office Communication mailed April 10, 2002. Therefore, claims 15, 16 and 17 have been amended thrice.

It is believed that the presented explanation has clarified the situation and the claims are in compliance with 37 C.F.R section 1.121(c)(1)(I).

CONCLUSION

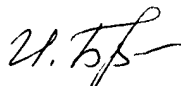
Passage of pending claims to issue is respectfully requested.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the U.S. Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Assistant Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to our **Deposit Account No. 03-1952**, referencing No. **286002020023**. However, the Assistant Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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